

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for bending glass panels, said apparatus comprising :
 - an upper tier of successive mould carriages [(9)], having a front or back wall [(11)] thereof separating from each other at least the following stations: successive preheating stations [(2, 3)] including a last preheating station, and one or more successive a bending station, bending stations (4a, 4b) from each other, and at least one pre-bending station upstream of the bending station, said mould carriages [(9)] being adapted to be intermittently movable towards the bending station [(4b)];
 - a lower tier of successive mould carriages [(9)], having a front or back wall [(11)] thereof separating successive cooling stations [(5, 6, 7)] from each other, said mould carriages ~~being (9)~~ being adapted to be intermittently movable in a direction opposite to the moving direction of the upper tier carriages;
 - a number of bending moulds [(12)] supported by the mould carriages [(9)];
 - first radiation heating elements [(13, 14)] in the ceiling of the preheating stations at least in some [(3)] of the preheating stations;
 - second radiation heating elements [(14)] in the ceiling of the pre-bending and ~~one or more~~ bending stations [(4a, 4b)];

- an intermediate floor ~~[[(15)]]~~ which separates the at least one pre-bending station ~~(4a) upstream of the bending station (4b) and/or at least~~ and the last preheating station ~~[[(3b)]]~~ from a cooling station ~~[[(5)]]~~ therebelow;
- a lift mechanism ~~[[(20)]]~~ for lowering the mould carriages ~~[[(9)]]~~ from the upper tier to the lower tier together with bent glass panels; and
third radiation heat elements disposed on top of the intermediate floor;
wherein the mould carriages ~~(9) being provided with~~ have an open-structured or otherwise highly heat transmitting floor ~~[[(10)]]~~, ~~characterized in that on top of the intermediate floor (15) are~~ and the third radiation heating elements ~~[[(16)]]~~ are positioned below the level defined by ~~[[a]]~~ the floor ~~[[(10)]]~~ of the mould carriage ~~[[(9)]]~~; and
wherein the third radiation heating elements are disposed adjacent to one another in a lateral direction relative to at least one of the last preheating station and the at least one pre-bending station.

2. (Currently amended) The ~~[[An]]~~ apparatus as set forth in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the third radiation heating elements ~~[[(16)]]~~ comprise open resistances.

3. (Currently amended) The ~~[[An]]~~ apparatus as set forth in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the third radiation heating elements ~~[[(16)]]~~ are ~~divided~~ for formed as resistance rod elements ~~(16a, 16b, 16c) adjacent to each other in a lateral direction of the station (3b, 4a) and~~ having individually adjustable heating effects.

4. (Currently amended) The ~~[[An]]~~ apparatus as set forth in claim 1, ~~wherein any of claims 1-3, characterized in that~~ the third radiation heating elements ~~[[(16)]]~~ lie on top of the intermediate floors ~~[[(16)]]~~ of at least the ~~final~~ last preheating station ~~[[(3b)]]~~ and the at least one pre-bending station ~~[[(4a)]]~~.

5. (Currently amended) The ~~[[An]]~~ apparatus as set forth in claim 1, ~~wherein any of claims 1-4, characterized in that~~ the third radiation heating elements ~~[[(16)]]~~ have a lengthwise direction which is the same as that of the furnace, and that the radiation heating elements ~~[[(16b)]]~~ present in the middle section in the lateral direction of the furnace have a heating effect which is individually adjustable relative to the heating effect of the heating elements ~~(16a and 16c)~~ on either side thereof, the heating effects below the middle section and end sections of a pair of glass panels to be bent being adjustable relative to each other.

6. (Currently amended) The ~~[[An]]~~ apparatus as set forth in claim 1 ~~[[or 2]], characterized in that~~ wherein the floor of one or more preheating stations ~~[[(3a)]]~~ is open and provided with heating resistances, with reflectors underneath the latter.

7. (Currently amended) The ~~[[An]]~~ apparatus as set forth in claim 1, comprising preheating stations ~~[[(2)]]~~ in ~~the~~ an upstream end of the upper tier of successive mould carriages, in which the heating of glass panels is effected by ~~the application of~~ applying forced convection ~~receiving which receives~~ its thermal energy from glass panels in ~~the~~ a cooling process ~~of cooling in the~~ downstream stations

[[(7)]] of the lower tier of successive mold carriages, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein heating resistances are mounted on top of convectional blowpipes or boxes present on the floor of the preheating stations [[(2)]].